

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A flexible fiberoptic endoscope has an insertion member with a distal end portion split
5 longitudinally into a plurality of independently operable working segments each provided with at
least one longitudinally extending working channel. Visualization optics are provided in the
working segments or a separate central segment surrounded by the working segments. A sheath
temporarily joins the working segments to one another during an introduction procedure. The
sheath is removed upon insertion of the endoscope, so that the working segments may be
10 /separated from one another and independently maneuvered via proximal control heads to
facilitate the performance of an endoscopic surgical procedure.